

**NORTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING**

Wednesday, October 21, 2020
10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Central Time
Virtual Meeting

October 21, 2020

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Jodi Webb, Teresa Larsen, Trevor Vannett, Robyn Throlson, Renee Speidel-Wetzsteon, Gillian Plenty Chief, Terry Peterson, Joseph Hall, Gerry Teevens, Russ Cusack, Tina Bay, Jason Sutheimer, Matthew McCleary

Members Absent: Cathy Quintane, Bruce Murry, Uma Hoffman, Brandy Johnson, Shannon Cook, Marshall Longie

Others Present: none

Joe Hall called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

Action: A motion to accept the agenda was made by Renee Speidel-Wetzsteon and seconded by Trevor Vannett. Motion carried.

Action: A motion to approve the January 2020 minutes was made by Gerry Teevens and seconded by Russ Cusack. Motion carried.

Action: A motion to approve the 2021 meeting dates was made by Trevor Vannett and seconded by Tina Bay. Motion carried.

2021 Virtual meeting Dates:

January 20	8:30a.m.-12:30 p.m. CST
April 21	10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. CST
July 21	10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. CST
October 20	10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. CST

Barb offered to invite speakers for future meetings as requested by the Council.

DVR Region II Update – Peter Yung

- 2020 marks 100th anniversary of VR, 30th anniversary of ADA, and 75th anniversary of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (October)
- Region VII serves 7 counties and have 12 staff
- Currently 50% of staff are work from home per Executive Office's order due to COVID-19
- 4 Pre-ETS contracts serving 30 area high schools

GOAL	ACHIEVED	PERCENTAGE	
Client Served	196	173	88%
Closed Employed	90	91	101%
Plans Developed	141	139	99%
Employer Contacts	280	451	161%

Rehab Rate – 59.1%

Group Presentation – 117 reaching 913 people

Challenges: High Unemployment – just under 8% in Minot. More employer layoffs than hiring

DVR Regional VI Update – Jennifer Moldenhauer

- Region VI covers 9 counties, 20 high schools- has three colleges, 2 Adult Education Centers and 2 Transition Academies serving 18-21-year-old students
- All counselors see clients by appointment only, following all Guidelines of the ND Health Department. 50% staff in office each day with the other 50% on outreach or home/off site office. Communicate with clients via phone, internet and in person
- One trained Customized employment provider and another who is just starting to train
- Plans for VR in conjunction with Anne Carlsen Center, Freedom Resource Center and Mayor's Committee to have a panel for employers to ask questions about hiring and disabilities/accommodations
- Involved with ND Home School Association annual event
- Recognized outstanding effort of a local employers to offer meaningful employment and make accommodations

GOALS:

Exceeded employment goal by 4, closing 56 cases as successfully employed

Met Pre-ETS time goal of 2250 hours

Contacted 133 businesses- exceeded business contacts goal by 53

Applications were down from March through August

Business specialist out of Fargo works with the Jamestown office

VR Director Update:

- Implemented Customized Employment Policy – To date, we had trained four community rehabilitation providers in the first cohort with four more finishing in the current cohort
- Coordinated with the N.D. Tax Department to get information out regarding the tax incentive legislation passed to encourage employers to hire individuals placed through Customized Employment
- Working with Behavioral Health Division to braid funding/coordinate services under the 1915i, specifically Individual Placement Services for individuals with a behavioral health diagnosis and/or traumatic brain injury
- 15 Pre-ETS contracts covering 65 schools across the state – served 2,485 students with disabilities
- Successfully closed 525 individuals statewide
- 103 Individuals VR is involved with were laid off or lost a job due to COVID-19
- 108 individuals closed cases due to COVID-19
- Staff have hybrid schedules providing tele-rehab as well as in person services, follow DHS procedures regarding PPE, sanitization, social distancing etc.
- Worked with ITD to ensure confidential digital platforms
- Update on VR staffing
- Budget – possible half million not drawn down for 2019
 - Attributed to open positions, COVID-1, lack of travel/client services

Election of the Chair and Chair Elect

Action: A motion to elect Renee Speidel-Wetzsteon to serve as the 2021 Chair was made by Teresa Larsen and seconded by Matthew McCleary. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Action: A motion to elect Trevor Vannett to serve as the 2021 Chair Elect was made by Renee Speidel-Wetzsteon and seconded by Matthew McCleary. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Tribal Updates – There was no one present at the meeting to give a Tribal Update. Robyn Throlson relayed a message from Ben Wolf Necklace: They are working in office offering service by appointment only. Some work done off site/home. There have been COVID-19 positives in the area. Recruiting for new applicants.

Vision-ADA- Ergonomics - Aimee Volk

Vision Services

- Vision rehabilitation specialists available in 7 regions
- Collaborate with VR counselors on cases involving vision related diagnosis
- Services a VRS may assist with

ADA

- VR collaborates with employers/public/clients on ADA, accessibility, reasonable accommodations, etc.
- One point of contact in each regional office for ADA consultation
- Governor signed proclamation regarding October 2020 as National Disability Awareness Month
- Celebrations across the state around 30th anniversary of ADA being adopted

Ergonomics

- VR works with employers/clients providing ergonomic assessments
- Upcoming training to assess workstations in homes (more people working from home due to COVID-19)

Committee Reports-

Membership/Public Relations Committee – Joe Hall, Chair

- **Action:** A motion was made by the membership committee to elect Jacey Enget to the SRC Council and seconded by Trevor Vannett. Motion carried
- **Action:** A motion was made by Teresa Larsen to remove Uma Hoffman from the SRC for non-attendance. Tina Bay seconded. Motion carried.
- Our disability percentage for the full Council is 53%

Planning/Evaluation Committee – Teresa Larsen, Chair

- Discussion surrounding how Pre-ETS is being measured and the extent of its impact on VR services in ND and nationwide.
- **Action:** Barb and Robyn will gather data and report at next meeting
- Discussion surrounding how VR can utilize client successes at the post-secondary level to promote VR services.
- **Action:** Robyn will check with Warren on what data we have regarding this and report at the next meeting.

Resource Committee – Jason Sutheimer, Chair

- Discussion around VR applicants and staffing.
- Training people in telecommuting environments
- Improve how job announcements are written– “google trends” analyzes how people search for jobs- make changes in wording of job announcements to draw applicants in

Employment Committee – Bruce Murry, Chair – did not meet

Public Comment - There was no one from the public for comment

Next meeting – January 20, 2021

8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. 2020 CST via TEAMS

Action: A motion was made by Jason Sutheimer to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Gillian Plenty Chief. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm